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For Immediate Release: February 2, 2009  
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**Teens, Fire, Education and Medical Officials Launch Burn Awareness Week**  
*Winners of High School Burn Awareness Video Contest Announced*

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan and Thomas D'Esmond, administrator, Shriners Hospitals for Children Boston launched Burn Awareness Week (February 1-7, 2009) at a presentation hosted by Shriners Hospitals for Children in Boston, a pediatric burn hospital. The winners of a statewide contest for high school media students, the *YouTube™ Burn Awareness Video Contest*, sponsored by the state Department of Fire Services, the Mass. Association of Safety and Fire Educators (MA SAFE), and the Mass. Property Insurance Underwriting Association, were announced at the event.

"This high school video contest builds upon the successful relationships that school and fire departments have built over the past 14 years of the Student Awareness of Fire Education or S.A.F.E. Program here in Massachusetts," said Fire Marshal Coan. The S.A.F.E. Program provides grants to fire departments to make trained fire and life safety educators available to work with classroom teachers to deliver age-appropriate lessons.

**Winning Videos**

This is the first year of the contest and 18 teams from five high schools — Agawam, Cheshire, Hudson, North Attleboro, and Sharon — submitted entries. While all 18 videos were creative and interesting, the first place winners were from Agawam High School for their video *Viewer Discretion Advised*; the second place winners were from Hoosac Valley High School for their video *Hands Off Fireworks*; and the third place winners were another team from Agawam High School for their video *Sharks*.

**Shriners Hospitals Sponsors of National Burn Awareness Week**

"The theme of this year's Burn Awareness Week is *preventing gasoline burns*. It is an opportunity to remind ourselves of the proper use of gasoline as well as the necessary

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safety measures we can take to keep our families as safe as possible,” said Tom D’Esmond. “Because gasoline is so commonly used to fuel our cars, lawnmowers and other outdoor machinery, people often forget that gasoline can be dangerous and precautions need to be taken to prevent injury,” he added. Shriners Hospitals and Shriners International are the national sponsors of Burn Awareness Week.

### **Teens and Young Adults at Risk for Gasoline Burns**

“Many of the videos teenagers and young adults see and post on popular video websites such as You Tube™, demonstrate risky or otherwise unsafe behavior but never tell the rest of the story – the painful, enduring injuries that occur,” said Coan. According to the Massachusetts Burn Injury Reporting System (M-BIRS), which by law collects injury reports on all burns affecting 5% or more of the entire body surface area, 8% of the burn injuries reported were caused by gasoline. One-third of these victims were between the ages of 15 and 24. “In 2007, individuals in the 15-24 year-old age group were at greater risk of suffering burns from gasoline-related incidents,” said Coan.

### **Burn Awareness Video Contest**

“The contest was designed to have teens explore the issues around burn prevention for themselves and convey those messages in a way other teens are likely to pay attention to,” said Capt. Rick Tustin, president of MA SAFE. “Our goal was to partner with high school media teachers and use burn prevention as a vehicle to help them reach the goals of the English and Language Arts Curriculum Framework Media Strand.”

### **Prizes and Viewing the Winning Videos**

MA SAFE and the Mass. Property Insurance Underwriting Association sponsored prizes for the top three winning videos. The Grand Prize was a digital video camera for the school and members of the winning team shared \$200 in gifts cards from Best Buy™, Circuit City™ or Barnes & Noble®. The Second Place team shared \$100 in gift cards from Best Buy™, Circuit City™ or Barnes & Noble®. The Third Place team shared \$50 in gift cards from Best Buy™, Circuit City™ or Barnes & Noble®. The Department of Fire Services will post the winning videos on its You Tube™ account. Search for videos posted by DSFOSFM to view them.

The judges included Communication Professor Mark Leccese from Emerson College, Barry Ouellette, senior producer with DigiNovations, Capt. Rick Tustin, president of MA SAFE, Ron Meehan from the Mass. Property Insurance Underwriting Association, and Melissa Gorman, R.N., Allison Vincent and Kathy Golden from the Shriners Hospital for Children, and the Department of Fire Services.

“The Mass. Property Insurance Underwriting Association is pleased to be part of this innovative approach to teaching fire and burn safety to teenagers,” said Ron Meehan, representing the property and casualty insurance companies of Massachusetts. “Our company has sponsored an annual poster contest in the middle school since 1982 and this is a great way to reach older youth,” he added.

**Video Contest**

The contest was open to grade 9-12 students enrolled in Massachusetts schools and submissions had to be from school-sponsored communications courses or sponsored extra-curricular groups. Communications teachers or faculty sponsors were required to review and approve all storyboards before filming started. Videos were required to be one to three minutes long, explore burn prevention topics, be well researched, not demonstrate risky or unsafe behavior, and to be both educational and informative. This contest addressed learning standard components 27.6 (Gr. 9-10) and 27.8 (Gr. 11-12) of the Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Framework (June 2001), Media Strand - General Standard 27: Media Production. School districts offering communications classes, which include the design and creation of media productions, were encouraged to promote this contest through an independent or group assignment as part of its curriculum delivery.

For more information about burn safety or the contest go to [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs), then click on *Fire Safety Topics*, then select *Burn Awareness* or [www.burnawarenessweek.org](http://www.burnawarenessweek.org).

**Shriners Hospitals for Children – Boston**

Shriners Hospitals for Children – Boston is a pediatric burn hospital, research, and teaching center. The Boston hospital, operated by Shriners Hospitals for Children, is an international health care system of 22 hospitals dedicated to providing specialty pediatric care, innovative research and outstanding teaching programs. Children up to age 18 with orthopaedic conditions, burns of all degrees, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and palate are eligible for admission and receive all care at no charge — regardless of financial need. For more information, please visit [shrinershospitals.org](http://shrinershospitals.org).

**MA SAFE**

The Massachusetts Association of Fire and Safety Educators is a professional association of fire and life safety educators from all professions that provides professional development training for its members and promotes community education efforts.

**Massachusetts Property Insurance Underwriting Association**

The Massachusetts Property Insurance Underwriting Association (MPIUA) also known as the Massachusetts FAIR Plan (Fair Access to Insurance Requirements) provides basic property insurance on eligible property for applicants who have been unable to gain insurance through the voluntary market. It sponsors the statewide Arson Watch Reward Program that includes an arson hotline, the annual poster contest for middle school students and provides rewards for information that solves the crime of arson.

**Department of Fire Services**

The Department of Fire Services is the sole agency within state government responsible for overall coordination of fire service policy and operations. Through the Office the State Fire Marshal Division, it manages the state burn registry, fire incident reporting and public education programs.